

OUT22/472

19 January 2022

Mr Lander Robinson  
Major Project Assessment  
Department of Planning and Environment

C/- Major Projects Portal

Dear Mr Robinson

**New Request for Advice –Forest Glen Solar Farm (SSD-9451258) (Dubbo Regional Council)**

Thank you for your correspondence dated 30 November 2021 about the opportunity to comment on this development proposal.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) Agriculture is committed to the protection and growth of agricultural industries, and the land and resources upon which these industries depend.

In response to the Department's original advice (dated 22 October 2020) the following are a review of the specific requirements that are addressed in the environmental assessment.

1. The EIS notes the commitment to a soil survey to be undertaken on approval. This will provide information related to the construction phase of the project to assist with erosion and revegetation, but also baseline data that provides a basis to final land rehabilitation should the solar operation cease. This information will help in determining final soil and land condition targets as part of the closure plan. Section 7.3.2 (Page 170) notes the overview of tests to be undertaken. In addition to this testing for soil integrity for construction purposes should also take place. The commitment to a rehabilitation plan for final landuse restoration (LU6, Page 297-8) is noted, with further details required if approved.
2. There is a commitment to the site being used for continuing agricultural lands uses and as part of the management of the site's area. The proposed management of groundcover is addressed, and the development of a groundcover management plan both after construction and ongoing management (S2- Page 220) also will address these vegetation management issues.
3. We note the undertaking of a Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment with agriculture and other neighbouring landholding landuses (Section 7.3.2, Page 167). Although the risks are explained it shows the need for careful management of areas such as dust and noise especially in relation to the construction phase that require ongoing attention to avoid further conflict and complaint with neighbouring landholdings.
4. We also note the commitment to the removal of all below ground infrastructure to 500mm depth on final closure (Section 8.1.2, Page 219). This will assist the re-

introduction of agricultural land use, and the potential for cropping should this take place.

5. The commitment to a pest and weed management plan is also noted during construction and operations (LU5, Page 297).

The only outstanding issue is the claim that soil health and capability in comparison to current agricultural activities will improve as a result of the solar operation (Commitment re the Primary Production and Rural Development SEPP 2019, page 58). This is an ideal opportunity to measure the soil health and its capability as part of the baseline data to substantiate this, but also as an ongoing monitoring process that can take place during the operational phase of the solar farm. This may also be undertaken with the groundcover management plan actions.

Should you require clarification on any of the information contained in this response, please contact me on 0427949987 or by email at [landuse.ag@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:landuse.ag@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

Yours sincerely



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